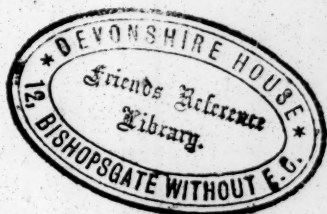


A N^o 116
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T H E

Athenian Society Unvaild:

Or, their Ignorance and Envious Abusing of the

Q U A K E R S

Detected and Reprehended.

THE Prediction of the Blessed Apostle, 2 Tim. 3. 12. *All that will live Godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer Persecution*, has been the perpetual Experience of the Church of Christ in all Ages; only with this variation, that their Sufferings have been sometimes after one manner, and sometimes after another; one while Life, another Liberty; and very frequently Estates have been the Prizes that an innocent and harmless Life have cost their Owners: The Truth hereof is attested, not only by History very Ancient, but also by some so very Modern, that it is not yet past Memory. But when all these in good measure have, by God's Providence and a Government's Favour, been stopped, then the same Spirit, frequently in the same Members, and sometimes in others, hath laboured to blacken and misrepresent those they could not destroy under the Pretext of Law. This is the present Case; it is but a little while since, that Liberty and Estate were the common Rates which we call'd Quakers (with many others) were made to compound at (if I may so speak) for our Innocency and Conscientious Scruples. But the mildness and gentleness of the present Government, has so signally gone beyond that of some of their Predecessors, that they have *not only* recommended these excellent Qualities by *their particular Example*, but also by the Authority of a Law, which is remembered by us, with true Gratitude and Thankfulness. Now the Advantage of so Noble an Example, one might think should have been sufficient, if not to sweeten, yet to chill the most virulent Spirits, and more especially yours, who call your selves the *Athenian Society*; and have made so many Offers at a Reformation, by the public Pretences you have made, to encourage some and advise all to the furtherance of it: These, 'tis true, have been your Pretensions, but your Practice is no other than the Transcript of the

* Preface to the second Volume. * Jesuits Maxim; who you say were they, that by their Disguises and false Pretences were the first Promoters of the many unhappy Differences that are now among us, both in Church and State. Now what is odious in them, can it be lovely in you? Or what is against the Peace of Government in them, can it be otherwise in you? Surely no: For Crimes lose not their Nature when they only change their Agent, nor is Satan at all the more Holy for being

in an *Athenian*, or in one called a Christian: The Truth of this you have sufficiently evinced by the Falshoods and Abuses which you have so liberally bestowed both upon Communities and particular Persons. And yet you are the Men, who at your appearance by this Name, promis'd to use in your ensuing Design, much Christian Candor and Modesty; and not to * widen * Preface to the Breaches, but to avoid either second Volume. Practices or Disputes that might tend thereto: And further, that you would answer no obscene Questions, nor any whose Answer should be an Abuse to particular Persons: With more to the same purpose, which I could here recite, were it as necessary as it is easie. But I shall here pass it over, as well as your other Contradictions and Nonsense, of which we have generally notice once a Week by the *London Mercury*; for my Design is, herein chiefly to instance in those Answers of Questions, which were the cause of the Letter I sent you, (which I shall set down anon) to which, tho' you promis'd an Answer, yet have not given one, unless Queries and Impertinency may deserve that Name; by detecting your Falshood and Lies, and also something concerning *John Whitehead*, whom by Name you have abused in your Buffoonry. But I have observed that in defiance of your Rules, in breach of your pretended Charity, and contrary to Morality and to true Christianity, you have seemed glad of an opportunity to be abusive towards us in particular, as will plainly enough appear, by your Answer to a Question in Vol. 3. N. 8. q. 6. *Whether it be lawful for a Christian to Swear?* To which you, not content to deliver your Answer in the Affirmative only, have stigmatiz'd all as silly Enthusiasts who believe the contrary. Now as this Answer of yours did cause, so your Promise that you would fairly Answer any Objections that were made to your Answers, did encourage the sending of a Letter to you soon after; wherein among other Things, were the three following Queries.

1. *Whether since the very end of Christ's coming into the World (as is testified) was to take away Sin and finish Transgression, he did not thereby supersede the very use of all Oaths?* 2. *Whether if Men did cooperate with the Assistance that Christ Jesus lends, and obey the Precepts he has given, they might not thereby attain the end of his coming?* 3. *Whether there is any positive Command in the Gospel, enforced by words more comprehensive, full, positive and pertinent, than this of Swear not, &c.* To

To these you have not returned any Answer, as by your fore-mentioned promise you were obliged, but still proceed further to abuse and belie us, in such Instances as your own Eyes and Ears, if you ever employed them to read or hear our Principles from our selves, must needs convince you of (for you say you have used them herein:) From whence the Inference is very easy, that your Disease is Malice, because your Assertions are directly contradictory to what has been at all times Spoken and Written by our Friends: But if you have not read or heard from our selves, what you have asserted to be our Belief, then what Abatements are to be made from the Malice of your Charge, must be added to the Impudence of it, in that you are of those, who said, *Report, and we will Report it*; which shews you to be neither more Christian nor less Wicked; this will best appear by the Charge it self. 'Where in *Vol. 3. N. 23. q. 4.* you affirm the Quaker's Opinions to be dangerous and detestable (as indeed they were, were it true, that you afterwards affirm) that they speak contemptibly of the Bible, and will by no means allow it to be God's Word; that they have turned the most Sacred Truths therein contain'd, into jejune Allegory; that they speak not very Honourably of our Saviour, deny the Trinity, and many, if not all, embrace the other *Socinian* Dream, of the *Soul's Sleeping till the Resurrection*: And afterwards in *Vol. 4. N. 30. q. 1.* The Quakers have been e're since their rise, look'd upon as the Jesuits, By-Blows of the Jesuit; that they deny the plenary Satisfaction of Christ, and rest on their own Merits; that Fanaticism, Enthusiasm and Infidelity together, make up the Creed of the Quaker, they being a Compendium of almost all sorts of Heresies; who deny the Satisfaction and Divinity of Christ, as also his Humanity; nay, deny Angels, Spirits, Heaven and Hell, and the Existence of Souls after Death.

Here is the Complex of your Lies and Slanders, freed from the profound Nonsense and palpable Ignorance, wherewith you have formally interlarded each of the above-cited places; but of each I shall give an Instance. First in the *23. N. q. 4.* where you say—*But if there be any of 'em who have left their first Principles, and are degenerated into Christianity.* What! think you Christianity to be worse than our Principles? For Degeneracy is, I think, to go from better to worse; or if this be to Frolick with Words, it's a very odd way of doing it. Of your palpable Ignorance, let this be an Instance, where, in *N. 30. q. 1.* you ask, *How they have the Face to pretend to what they never had, Christianity, when they were never Christen'd?* Now, if by Christning you mean Sprinkling a Face with Water, I am sure it is contradictory to that of the Apostle, who signifies, *That true and saving Christianity consists, in having the Conscience sprinkled from dead Works, to serve the Living God*: Which cannot be purged by any such external Operation, but only and alone by the Spirit of God in Man. By this time, I suppose, it will be thought sufficiently reasonable that we clear our selves, or that you should prove these your Assertions, which that you might do the last, was the occasion of this Letter, which (in that you call your Answer, in *V. 5. N. 29.* and which I shall consider anon) you call an angry one, and not agreeable to the Precept of *Turning the other Cheek*; to which I must tell you, that it is sufficiently known to have been our constant Practice, to bear the Smitings, the Buffetings, the Wastings and

the Plunderings, which Men of your Spirit and Temper have inflicted upon us under the pretext of Laws, whilst in use. Under all which Sufferings, God did by the Sheddings forth of his Spirit, so comfort our Spirits, that we can say in Truth, we took joyfully the Spoil of our Goods and Imprisonment of our Bodies, for his Name sake, and can also forgive them that did it; only desiring for the worst of them, as for you, That you may come to see the Evil you have done by these your Lies and Scandals, and turn from them by a sincere and hearty Repentance; that so your Sins may be forgiven, when the times of refreshing shall come from the Lord's Presence. But notwithstanding all this, should we be silent to these your Lies, it might be construed a joyning with you against that *Holy Truth*, of which we are Professors, which we cannot do; but must herein clear it from your Calumnies. And the Jews might have told John the Baptist he was angry, when he calls them a *Generation of Vipers*: The like they might have told Holy Stephen, when in *Act. 7. 51, 52.* he calls them, *Uncircumcised in Hearts and Ears, Resisters of the Holy Ghost, Persecutors of the Prophets, Betrayers and Murderers of the Just One.* They both speak Truth, and its warmness was justified by its occasion. And now to shew that the warmness of this Letter, bears no proportion to the occasion you have given, and that I have not requited you with Vinegar for your Gall, I shall here give the Copy thereof; but without your frothy and abusive Parentheses: Which is as follows.

The Copy of the Letter I sent them.

Athenians,

AT, and since, your appearing in the World (by this Name) your repeated Protestations of Christian Candor and Modesty, in answering such Questions, as were fit to be answered, and total Silence in such as were not; did make the Ingenious of either Sex (however distinguished) willing to further what might be of Service to the Publick: But your notorious Prevarications have sufficiently shewn, that what was intended for your Encouragement, and others Service, you have only made use of as a Ladder to climb higher than others, whereby you might have the hateful opportunity of abusing what, and whomsoever agrees not with you; and that by Aspersions so palpably gross and false, that it needs not the Judgment of an Athenian to Unvail you.

The present Ease and Felicity which we, called Quakers, do with others, find under the happy Influence of a mild and generous Government (which Happiness, we do with all Duty and Gratitude thankfully acknowledg and remember) has so far buried the late Distractions, Waste and Plunderings, that they are hardly now to be met with but in History. And that this Peace and this Felicity might be perpetual, the Wisdom of the Nation has been so Latitudinarian (to use your disdainful Expression) that among other Things, in an Act for that very purpose made, they have framed what they there Call, and what truly is, a Christian Profession or Confession; the Owners and Subscribers of which, as they are the King and Queens Lieg-Subjects, so they are Christians in Belief, notwithstanding all your Buffoonry and wilful Lies.

I shall only at present enumerate the Heads of your several Scandals and Abuses, which in your Preface to the 3. Volume, you say you took so much Pleasure in Composing: The first is *Vol. 3. N. 8. q. 6.* where you tax the paying of Obedience to a positive Command of Christ with Enthusiasm; but this being Language too kind, you do with the next opportunity, in *N. 23. q. 4.* of the same

Volume

Volume, assert upon your own Knowledge, our believing a number of portentous and monstrous Opinions, you there number up, and which here we do utterly deny, and ever did, declaring such your Assertion to be False, Scandalous and Malitious; hereby requiring you to make your Assertions good, or to be accounted, what you truly are, that is, the worst of Incendiaries; which Title, to convince the World, does peculiarly belong to you, you have in another of your Mercuries, Vol. 4. N. 30. q. 1. pretended to draw a Parallel between Quaker and Papist; but with such known Falshood, that there is now hardly any Person, who pretends to much less Reading than your witty selves, but knows it to be no other than a Malitious Lye; which plainly shews, that notwithstanding the noisy Offers, which you in your Mercuries make at a Reformation, your selves have not advanced the first Step towards it: And in the last-mentioned Question, where you pretend to consider them asunder, you have done it so unlearnedly, as well as falsely, that perhaps it needs not the strength of a Champion to foil you, who have fallen from the forms of Civility as well as Christianity, in that you have falsely belyed and accused your Neighbours.

You are not to suppose that this comes in the manner of a Question, which you may not think fit to Answer; for it is hereby declared, That if you do not, within some reasonable time, give the World clear Proofs of your Assertions, in the Places and Answers above-noted, you shall be exposed, and your Falshood and Baseness detected, not only by the Verbatim hereof in Print, but by a more particular Answer to each of your many Lies; I call them by this Name, which you affirm to be the detestable Opinions which we hold, and indeed do not, nor never did.

Decemb. 22.

1691.

By one who is in Scorn
called a QUAKER.

By this it appears that its end is, either that you would prove your Assertions or retract them; but instead of doing either, in that which you call your Answer, you have only shewn a little more ill Nature, and a great deal of Impertinency, in running so very wide from the Mark as you have done; by making your foolish and false Harangues, without proving any thing; and all this with a design (to use your own words) to preserve those of your Communion, by shewing them what Principles you say we really hold. But if you have no better Preservatives, than these palpable Lies, you need not wonder that People, coming to the Knowledge of that self-evident Principle, of the Light, Grace or Spirit of God in their own Hearts, do then leave you and your refuge. And here I must observe, that to evade the proving your Charges and to prevent any closer Answer, you endeavour to amuse the Reader and frighten us, by asking 10 Questions (if at least they all deserve that Name) in which you think there is so much Acumen, that they touch us to the quick; and all these to be answered Catagorically, or else the worst is to be taken *pro Confesso*. Now to Questions, on which so great stress is laid, the Reader will very naturally suppose, they ought to be very pertinent and very weighty; but I must inform him that in this present case it's far otherwise, as will appear plain enough by repeating them; and which are as follows.

1. Whether they all generally own the Scriptures to be the Word of God? 2. Whether they own Jesus Christ to have been God equal with the Father from all Eternity? 3. Whether they own the Holy Spirit to be God; and that in the Holy Trinity, there are three Persons and one God blessed for evermore? 4. Whether they hold their boasted

Light within to be this very third Person, or only their own natural Reason? 5. Whether they partake of either of the Sacraments in their Congregations; or whether they do not absolutely neglect both Baptism and the Supper of the Lord? 6. Whether they believe Angels, or any Immaterial Spirits besides the Soul of Man? 7. Whether they believe the Existence of the Soul after Death and Resurrection of the Body, and Reunion of the Soul thereunto at the day of Judgment? (Now the terrible ones) 8. Who was your first Founder? 9. Did they Quake and Tremble or no when they first came into England, and the reason thereof? 10. Where may we find their Creed or an Act of their Religion? And whether it is not altered in several particulars since their Rise, tho' but of so few Years standing?

These are what you vainly and fallily set to measure Christianity by, but they cannot do it; because some of them are Antiscritural (which yet you call your Rule) and others so ridiculous that they could not be asked, by a Man truly Christian; so that if I should not refer you to any Answer to these (for you would not have it now done *de Novo*, but by the Testimony of our Authentick Writers) your mighty Threaten would signify nothing; for it remains for you to prove your Assertions, they being denied by us; and tho' at pleasure you throw by your own Rules, yet you must not pretend to do so, by the continual Rules of Debate and Discourse. But the trouble hereof being as small, as your expectation can be great, I shall for this once do it; when I have first acquainted you, That tho' you pretend to be more Athenian than the Senate of the Nation; yet it will hardly become you to pretend to be more Christian than it: And if so; then, since Malice or some such Humour has spoiled your Memory, I will take leave to acquaint you, that in an Act made 1689. Entituled, *An Act for exempting their Majesties Protestant Subjects, &c.* there is something which upon the Authority of Holy Writ, as well as their own, is call'd a Christian Belief, and was made on purpose for us, call'd Quakers, as by the Act appears; and is as follows.

I A. B. Profess Faith in God the Father, and Jesus Christ his Eternal Son the true God, and in the Holy Spirit one God blessed for evermore; and do acknowledg the Holy Scriptures of the old and new Testament to be given by Divine Inspiration. This having been at all times (as it now is) our hearty Belief, you might have spared your three first Queries, which are not so Scriptural: To your fourth Query, read *Geo. Keith of Immediate Revelation not Ceased*: To your sixth and seventh, read *Sam. Fisher*, in a Treatise, Entituled, *[Some certain hidden Spiritual Verities revealed:]* And likewise for Answer to many of them, you may read *The Christian Quaker*, written by *Geo. Whitehead* and *Will. Penn*: And lastly, both to these and the rest, read *Rob. Barclay*, in his *Apology for the true Christian Divinity*, in which you will find a distinct Account of our Principles, and that they are consonant to Holy Writ, right Reason and pure Antiquity; for which reason it is, that our Principles are not chang'd nor indeed can be, they being preserv'd by the Spirit of God in us, with which there is no Variableness nor Shadow of turning: And many more (would I be prolix) I could number up, but here being enough, and more than is needful in this occasion, I shall stop. Now in these cited Authentick Writings you may find (as I have said) not only more than enough to Answer your Queries, but also the Truths therein contained, so clearly delivered, that were ye honest enough to confess it, you would say

say there is much less of the Jesuit in them, than there appears to be of their Nature in you, as is evident by your gross Lies and Abuses; which that I may not forget and you run from, by that Evasion which you pretended to fear in us; I shall here put you in mind, That whatsoever you shall say hereafter, cannot be look'd upon to have any Weight, unless you either prove or retract these your bold Affirmo's; which are hereby returned upon you as your Lies, viz. You affirm, 1. That the Quakers rest on their own Merits. 2. That they deny Heaven, Hell, Angels and Spirits. 3. That they believe the Soul to sleep in the Grave until the Resurrection. 4. That they deny the Divinity and Humanity of Christ. 5. That they deny the Scriptures to be the Word of God (or given by Divine Inspiration.) And 6. that Fanaticism, Enthusiasm and Infidelity, do make up the Quaker's Creed. If you pretend to prove them, it is expected that you do it from our Selves, or our own Writings; but if you cannot, let it hereby appear how fairly you have merited the Title of Incendiaries, which yet you're loath to own; but it being your due, you must be so accounted, in that you're Disturbers of the Publick Peace, which never had more mortal Enemies, than those, who under the mask of Religion have laboured to foment civil Broils, by the mutual Averfions which their false and noisy Clamours have too frequently procured. But in this Instance, the Peace is thus far secured, that if you do neither retract, nor prove your Assertions, your Abuses being cast upon a People, who return not Evil for Evil, are not therefore bound to return an Answer to every impertinent Scribble, this not being written either from Humour or mercenary Interest, is not design'd to be repeated whereby to trouble my self or others, who will hereby sufficiently understand your baseness, in your general Lies and Abuses, as now they shall your abusive handling of John Whitehead, who is belyed by your Querist (if at least it were not your selves) and both abused and belyed by you in Vol. 4. N. 30. q. 2.

Now here had been a fit opportunity to have put in practice that Rule of yours, which was, not to Answer any Question, whose Answer might be an abuse to particular Persons. But you, considering it was a Quaker, did dispence with it, tho you exposed your selves by rallying upon a Lie, in which there is so much obscenity, that it puts me in mind of a certain Altar **Rous. Archaeologie* which was at Athens, erected to **Injury Antica, lib. 1. p. 34.* and Impudence, and upon which I find not only the Ancient, but also the Modern Athenians, do sometimes Sacrifice, as will sufficiently appear by the fulsome Stuff with which the last cited Answer is fill'd. But first, your Query is false in fact, and John Whitehead did never so boast, as that affirms, of his Fatness; nor was he ever forced when in Prison, to feed on Bread and Water, nor was he ever 3 yards about the Waste, nor is his Wife near that size: Now before you went thus to rally, and be merry with the reputation of a Family, sure you should have taken as good Caution not to have been deceived, as you have sometimes required to the Attestation of an Experiment in Art, or Casualty in Nature, in which you have sometimes required more than the Name of the Relator; which if you cannot produce in this Instance, let it be supposed your selves were the Querist, and so guilty both of the Lie and the Abuse; which being so particular, take John Whitehead's Answer as followeth.

A few Questions for Answer, to the Authors of a Scandalous, Impertinent Paper, Entituled, *The Athenian Mercury*, Vol. 4. Numb. 30.

1. **W**Hether such Persons as by their Words or Actions, say, Come let us Smite him or them with the Tongue, Report and we will Report it, do not as much as in them lies, endeavour to stir up a new Persecution? And whether herein they do not symbolize with the worst Heathens and Papists, who used to cloath the ancient Christians in ugly Shapes, and painted Devils upon them, that they might be the readilier devoured by wild Beasts, and burnt to Death by the wicked Hands of cruel Men?

2. Whether great blindness of Mind hath not happen'd to such Men, as do look upon the People of God (in scorn called Quakers, who are at the greatest distance from Popery of any People in the World, professing Christianity) to be the By-Blows of the Jesuits, and Symbolizers with the Papists; for which if ye have no better Proof, than that heap of Lies and Slanders which follow, in your Answer to the first Question, then consider if Justice and Truth do not require you to repent of your Wickedness, and acknowledg you have followed blind Guides to your own hurt, and thereby wronged both your selves and your Neighbours?

3. Whether we have not by the Word of our Testimony in open and publick Assemblies, and the many Books spread up and down the Nation, sufficiently clear'd our selves from those foul Imputations ye would cast upon us; so that we need not multiply Answers to every vain impertinent Scribbler, our Principles and Practice being manifest to the Witness of God, in the Consciences of sober People that know us; which is a Refuge sufficient for us, against such silly Blasts of Envy?

4. Who is the Man, and where doth he dwell, that dares affirm, he heard John Whitehead boast of such a Miracle as your 2d Question affirms? That when he was fed in a Prison with Bread and Water, he fatted on it so as that he was 3 yards or more about the Waste; for I do positively deny that ever I made any such boast as your Query affirms; and I further say, that I was never under those Circumstances in a Prison, as to be confin'd to Bread and Water; and that I was never of that bigness, but that a Girdle of less than 4 foot would have met about my Waste; and therefore that monstrous prodigious Lie, of my being 3 yards about the Waste (there being many hundreds of Witnesses to the contrary) is turned back upon you, with that false suggestion, that his Wife is near as spacious as himself; and all those Slanders and scornful frothy Insinuations that follow thereupon, in your Answer to your second Query, which are as the Smoke of the bottomless Pit, and thither must descend, and into the Lake must be cast all those that love and make Lies, except they repent: Therefore prize your time, and do no more so wickedly: This Friendly Admonition is given you by one that can love his Enemies,

John Whitehead.

This is his own Letter, which you are desired to Answer; with which I shall end, when I have told you, That plain and positive Proof must make good your Charge, Repentance must make you honest Men, and the continuance in your Crimes, will make you as Incurable as those Beasts, which serve for Emblems in your Buffoonry: If you cannot do the first, the way to avoid the last is by the middlemost; which that you may, is the desire of him who can forgive Enemies, and is in scorn call'd a

Quaker.

London: Printed for Thomas Northcott in George-yard in Lombard-street, 1692. Where the Books above-mentioned are to be had.